



Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)

The ***John H. Chafee Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program*** is a proven federal investment in education, training, and economic opportunity for young people with experience in foster care. It helps eligible youth pursue education and career training after high school by covering tuition, fees, and other costs of attendance. Research demonstrates that transition-age foster youth who received ETVs are significantly more likely to persist in college and complete higher education.

The pending ***Fostering the Future Act*** is an opportunity for the federal government to modernize and fortify this provision by:

- Expanding voucher eligibility to include short-term workforce and vocational training, apprenticeships, and GED courses, to provide more options for young people with different educational starting points and career goals.
- Allowing states to provide ETV awards of up to \$12,000, to respond to the rising costs of education, training and cost of living.
- Allowing states to offer a grace period for students, preventing them from immediately losing their vouchers due to academic setbacks.

Three Recommendations:

1. Fully fund the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program at its authorized level of \$60 million. While Congress has authorized this amount annually, actual appropriations have stagnated around \$43 million for most of the program's history. Federal funding has remained unchanged despite expanding eligibility criteria, rising tuition rates, and increased cost of living.

2. Funding and implementation must go hand-in-hand. Ohio was not one of the 28 states who returned ETV funds in a 2025 GAO report. Our state maximizes distributing its allocation through strict monthly monitoring. After noticing that skyrocketing housing and food costs caused standard ETV caps to frequently fall short of a student's true cost of attendance, we [commissioned a research study](#).

3. Don't undercut or dilute the program's impact: The one concern we have about the pending ***Fostering the Future Act*** is its proposal to expand ETV eligibility to any youth who experienced foster care at age 14 or older without increasing funds. Broadening the pool of eligible students while keeping resources stagnant will create budget shortfalls. Here in Ohio, our existing allotment would quickly be exhausted, forcing us to either ration aid or turn away vulnerable students who rely on these vouchers to persist in post-secondary education.